

## Daily Devotional, January 13, 2021 Actions Driven by Faith Alone

***“For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.” James 2:26 (NIV)***

We never have to work at earning or keep our salvation. Salvation occurs when our hearts are transformed by believing that Jesus is the Lord and Savior of life and by repenting of our sins. God doesn't go back on His promise of eternal life, and God doesn't expect us to “earn our way to Heaven.”

In [James 2:26](#) we read, “For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also, faith apart from works is dead.” Even though our works in life can never earn our salvation, that does not lessen the importance of combining our actions with our faith.

What is essential to our understanding is how the two, faith and works, join together. Our faith is not ever governed by the things we do for God. No matter how much or how little we contribute to the building of God's kingdom, God still loves us just the same. Nevertheless, genuine faith will certainly generate action on our part. It is our faith and love for God that pushes and compels us to be kingdom builders.

Can you remember a time when someone did something generous and kind for you, a time when they went out of their way to make you feel truly loved? Most likely they did not bless you with this gift because they felt obligated or because someone told them to, but because their actions were motivated by genuine love for you.

That is precisely the way it works with Jesus. When we experience the sense of our salvation and the beautiful gift of grace that has been given, it's virtually impossible not to be mesmerized by the love of our Savior. And out of that captivation comes the desire to please Him and honor Him with the way we live our lives. We serve God out of the overflow of our love for Him.

As James has stated, our faith is dead if it doesn't naturally induce us to glorify God through our actions and service. On the opposite end of the continuum, our actions and works that are not driven by faith in God will eventually become troublesome and a huge burden to keep up.

I pray that you will take time today to evaluate your heart—what goes in and what flows out. Can you think of ways that you have served God by serving people? If not, I suggest that you find somewhere to serve! Yes, it's important to ask God where He wants you to be focusing your time and energy. Be diligent about it but be disciplined about it and get plugged in somewhere that you see the need. Trust me, the need is everywhere. You would have to have blinders on not to see it. If you cannot see it, ask God to place these needs on your heart. Search for them under God's guidance. Even in these trying times of isolation, there is much that we can do. The activity will do you a world of good and it will do much good for those who need the help.

If you are already serving, if you haven't already, stop and ask yourself why you're serving. Is it out of “Christian obligation”, to earn gold stars on your eternal report card, or are you serving out of a heart that loves God and wants to see God glorified? Remember the words of James: “Show me your faith without deeds and I will show you my faith by my deeds.” [James 2:18](#)

***Prayer: Lord, direct my heart into your love – a steadfast, persistent, all-pleasing love. Guide my heart into the perseverance of Christ—unbroken calmness, endurance, and persistence in service. When faced with choices, guide me through the storm with a heart of love and determination in doing good works for your kingdom. May my choices and priorities be guided by pure affection for you, the lover of my soul. May my actions be guided by the awareness that when I exercise my faith, you exercise power—in and through me. In Christ I pray, Amen.***